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To: 'microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
Date: 1/28/02 12:45pm
Subject: Microsoft Relief

To whom it may concern:

It appears to me that a great deal of Microsoft's market power comes from its policy of leasing its software and then using the copyright laws to enforce anticompetitive requirements.

May I suggest that Microsoft be required to sell its software and thereby relinquish relevant copyright rights, much as a book seller relinquishes such rights upon sale of a book. Customers, such as PC manufacturers, would then be free to alter Microsoft products to provide additional value to the end using consumer.

Microsoft will argue that any such alterations to the software will then make the product not maintainable and thereby void its warranty. While in the limit this is indeed possible, in practice most alterations would have little impact upon maintainability. Microsoft should therefore be also required to maintain any altered product unless and until it can show beyond reasonable doubt that such maintenance is an unreasonable commercial endeavor.

I have participated in the computer industry since 1968 and have at various companies been involved in the selling of hardware and software to PC manufacturers and PC end users. I testified for the people in US vs. IBM on software interface manipulation as an anti-competitive tactic.

The opinions expressed above are mine alone, and not necessarily those of any service provider enabling the transmission of this email.

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